

## A NOMENCLATRURAL CONUNDRUM<sup>1</sup>

Herbert L. Stahnke<sup>2</sup>

Koch (1836, 1837) placed into the literature the generic names *Vaejovis* and *Brotheas*, now respectively in the families *Vaejovidae* and *Chactidae* of the order *Scorpionida*. In 1876, Thorell changed their spelling with the statement: "I have corrected the faulty written names *Brotheas* and *Vaejovis* to *Broteus* and *Vejovis*—I do not allow myself to make such a correction without its having been first approved by a philologer *ex professo*." This emendation was accepted by the prominent scorpionologists of that period including such individuals as Simon, Kraepelin, Pocock and Birula.

Koch did resort to the use of descriptive classical names for his taxa. For these two names we find the following information: (Harper 1907) "*Vējōvis* (or *Vēdiovis* or *Vēdiiovis* (m); comes from *Ve* and *Jov*. (Jupiter), or anti-jove, an Etruscan divinity, a god of the under world, whose power to injure corresponded to the power of Jupiter to help. *Brōtēās* (m) was the son of Vulcan, the fire-god." Thorell was correct in detecting the incorrect spelling of these classical entities.

The current International Code of Zoological Nomenclature, however, stresses the importance of the intent of the original author rather than the correct classical spelling. Williams (1971) tries to do this when he states that Koch used this spelling "in the text, index and on the figures." This is not quite a correct statement. Koch did not use these terms in the text (the body of the paper) but only in the title. In fact, Koch seldom allowed himself the luxury of such typographical redundancy. Thus the places in which the names appear are very vulnerable to typesetting errors and proof reading was not per-

<sup>1</sup>Accepted for publication: January 7, 1972 [3.0164].

<sup>2</sup>Poisonous Animals Research Laboratory, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85281.

fect. A few cases will illustrate this point. *Androctonus stenelus* appears in the figure as *A. sthenelus* (Koch 1839a). *Scorpius niciensis* bears the spelling on the figure of *S. nicensis* (Koch 1841). Sometime the figures are incorrectly numbered, eg. *Androctonus eupeus* and *A. panopeus* (Koch 1839b) have the figure numbers reversed. It is safe to assume, because of the age Koch lived, that he was thoroughly acquainted with classical Latin but that the typesetter reverted to the use of the german spelling. Thus the spelling may be considered as an inadvertent error and a case of *lapsus calami* (International Code article 32(a) (ii)).

In this case the intent of the original author will have to be obtained from a source other than the original descriptions. If the spellings in the original articles were inadvertent errors Koch could have corrected them in later volumes of *Die Arachniden*. Since he consistently uses *Vaejovis* and *Brotheas* in later descriptions (Koch 1843) we can safely assume that the spellings reflect a little nationalism and that they were intentional. This seems to have been recognized by earlier workers (Roewer, 1943). Pocock, likewise, changed from *Vejovis* (1900) to *Vaejovis* (1902).

#### LITERATURE CITED

- BIRULA, A. AB., 1917. Faune de la Russie et des Pays Limitrophes. 1(1):57.  
 Harpers' unabridged Latin Dictionary, 1907.  
 KOCH, C. L. 1836. Arach. 3:51.  
 ———. 1838. Arach. 4:109.  
 ———. 1839a. Arach. 6:135; fig. 527.  
 ———. 1839b. Arach. 5:125; figs. 418, 419.  
 ———. 1841. Arach. 8:112; fig. 681.  
 ———. 1843. Arach. 10:4-17.  
 POCKOCK, R. I. 1900. Fauna of British India, Arachnida, p. 64.  
 ———. 1902. Biol. Cent.-Amer. pp. 8-13.

*Descriptors:* nomenclature; International Code of Zoological nomenclature; Scorpionida.